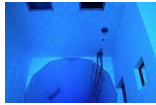


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30 Indispensable Writing Tips From Famous Authors

Writing is easy: All you have to do is start writing, finish writing, and make sure it's good. But here's some vastly more useful wisdom and advice from people who seriously know what the hell they're talking about.

posted about a week ago

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BuzzFeed Staff[Subscribe](#)

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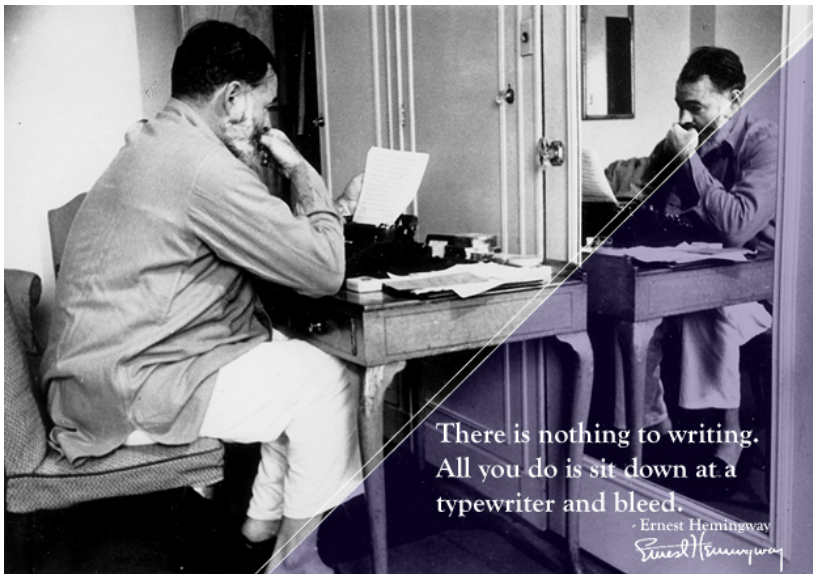
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1. Ernest Hemingway



There is nothing to writing.
All you do is sit down at a
typewriter and bleed.

Ernest Hemingway
Ernest Hemingway

2. Elmore Leonard

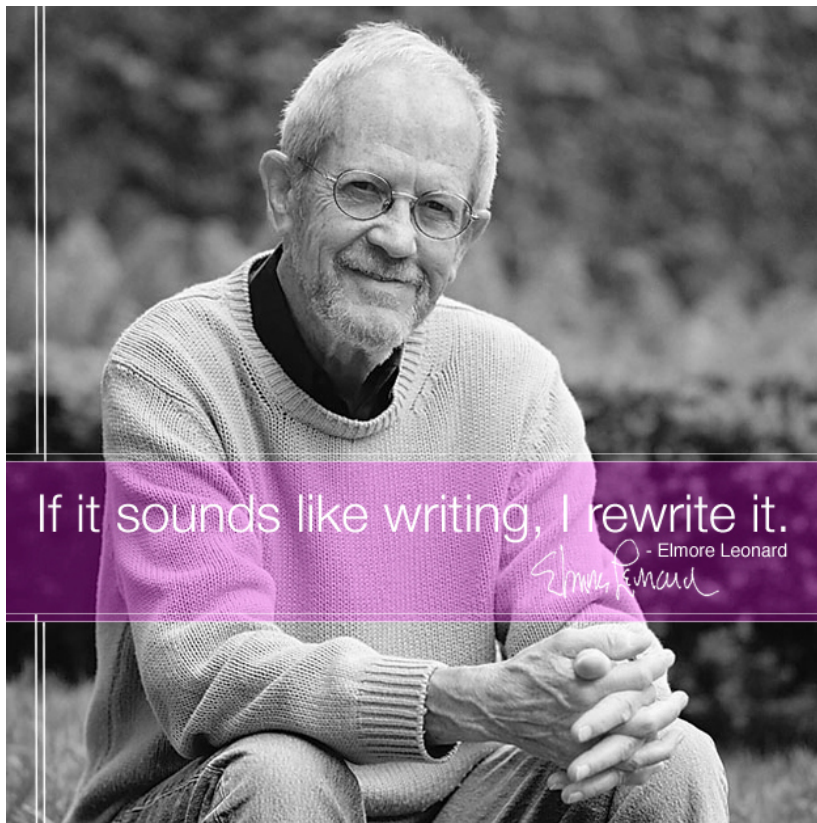
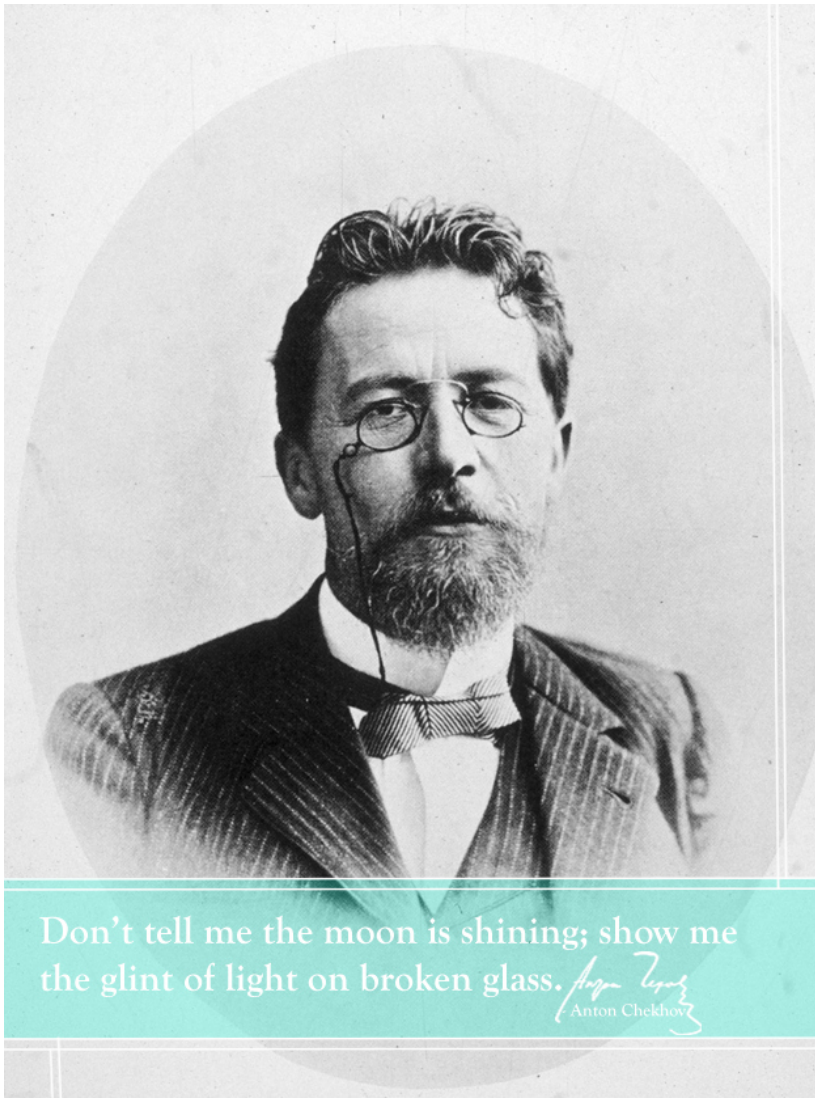


Image by DERMOT CLEARY / AP

3. Anton Chekhov



4. Toni Morrison

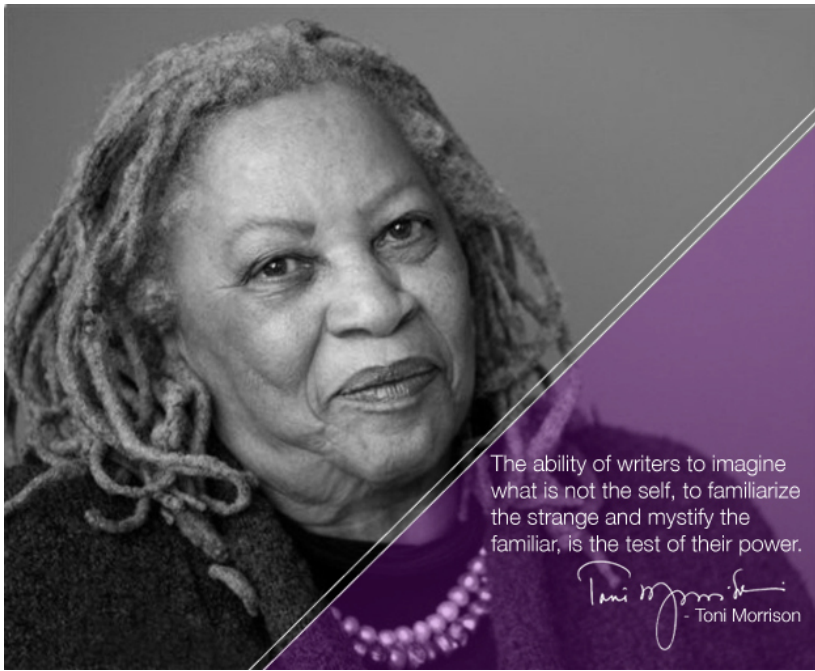
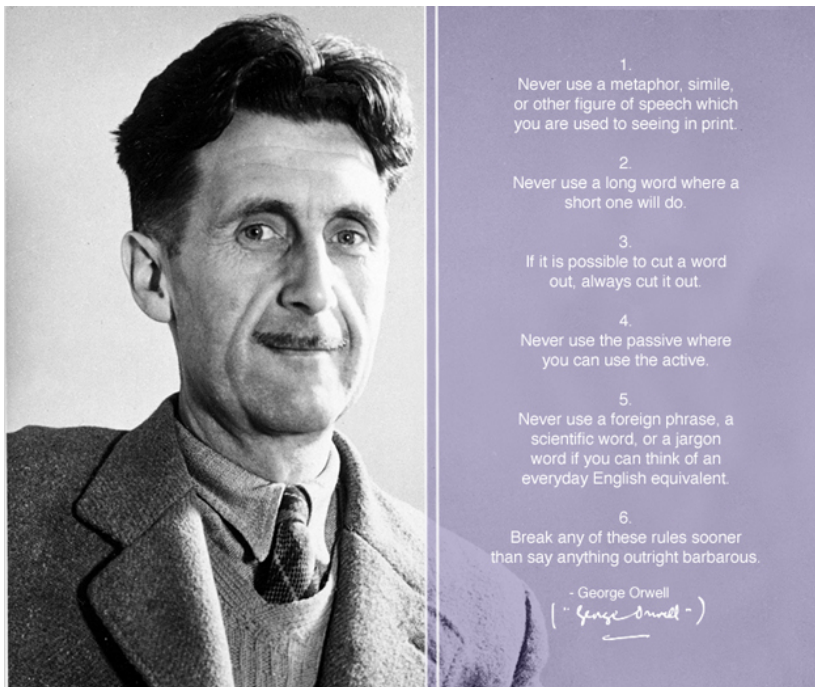
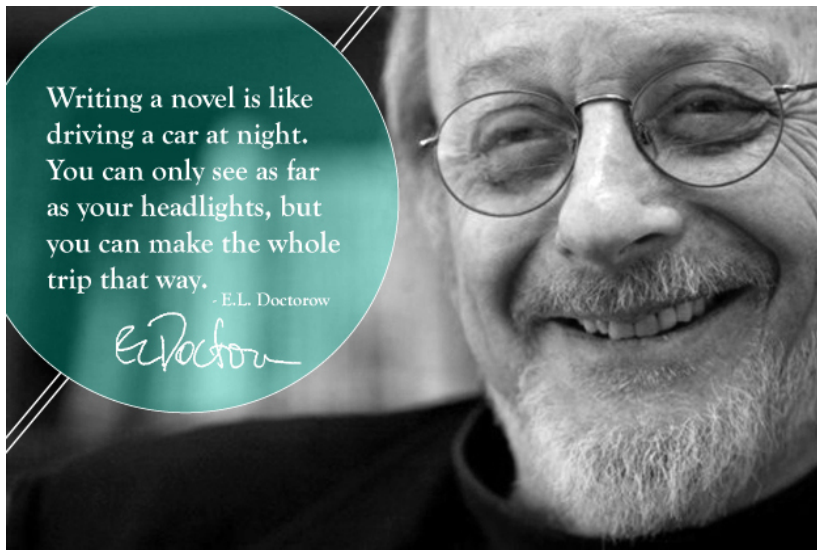


Image by Michael Lionstar / AP

5. George Orwell



6. E.L. Doctorow



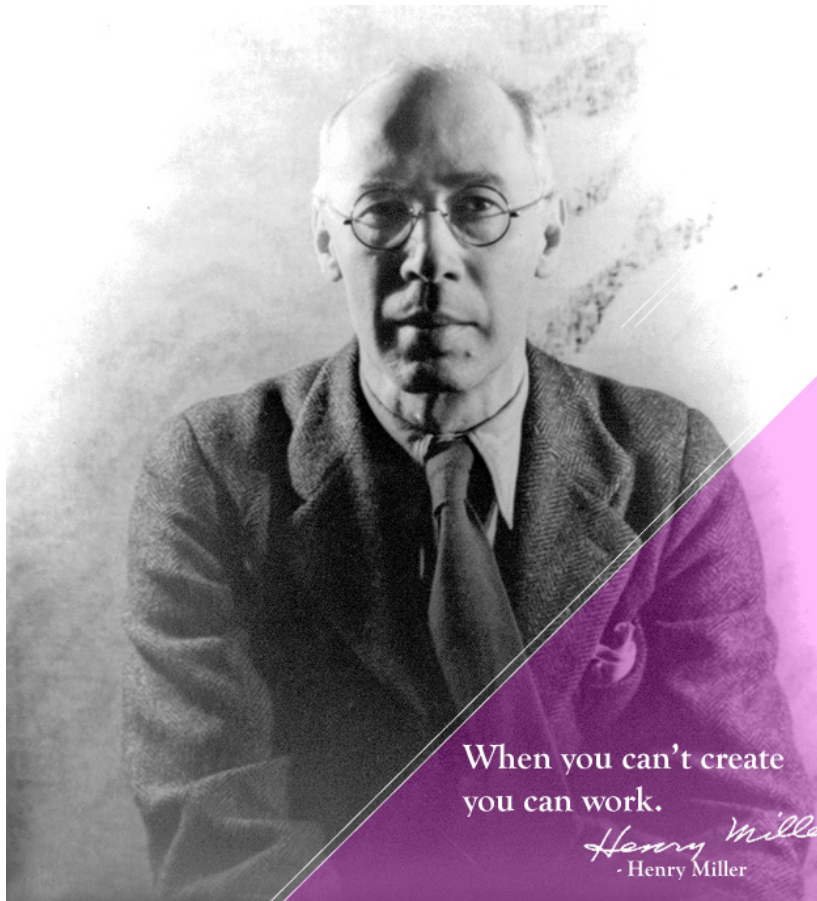
Writing a novel is like
driving a car at night.
You can only see as far
as your headlights, but
you can make the whole
trip that way.

- E.L. Doctorow

E.L. Doctorow

Image by MARY ALTAFFER / AP

7. Henry Miller



When you can't create
you can work.

Henry Miller

- Henry Miller

Library Of Congress

8. Elmore Leonard



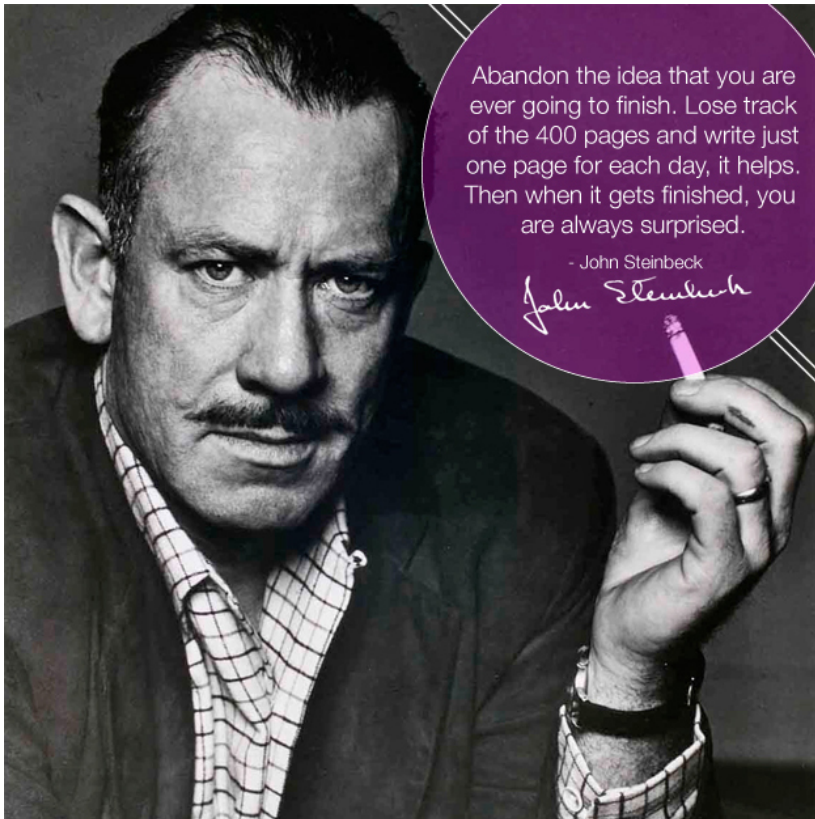
I try to leave out the parts that people skip.

- Elmore Leonard

Elmore Leonard

Image by Carlos Osorio / AP

9. John Steinbeck



Abandon the idea that you are ever going to finish. Lose track of the 400 pages and write just one page for each day, it helps. Then when it gets finished, you are always surprised.

- John Steinbeck

John Steinbeck

10. Stephen King

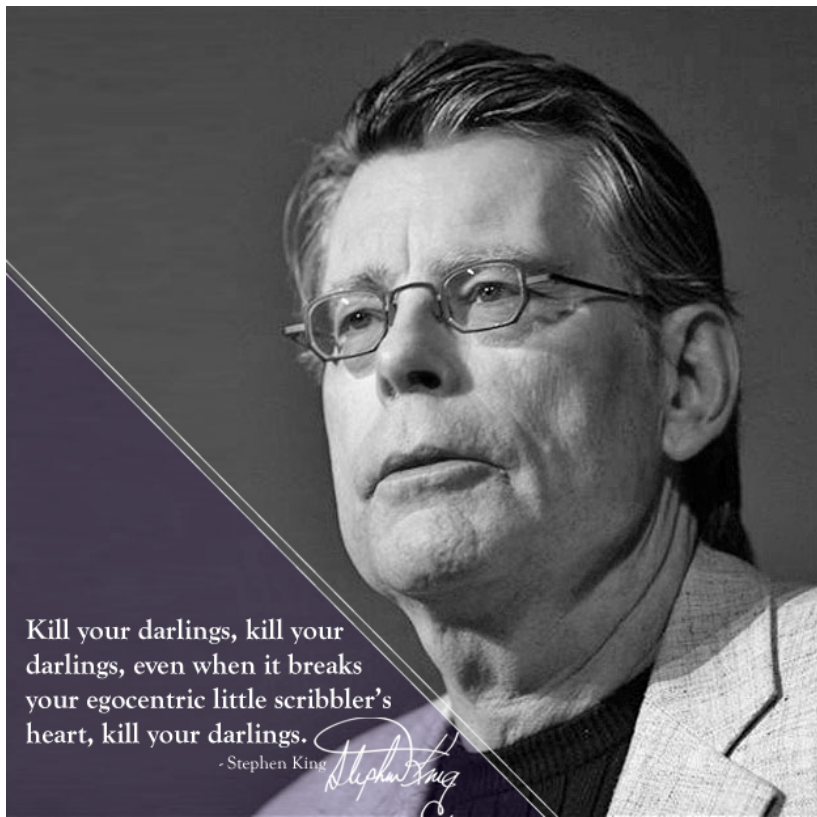
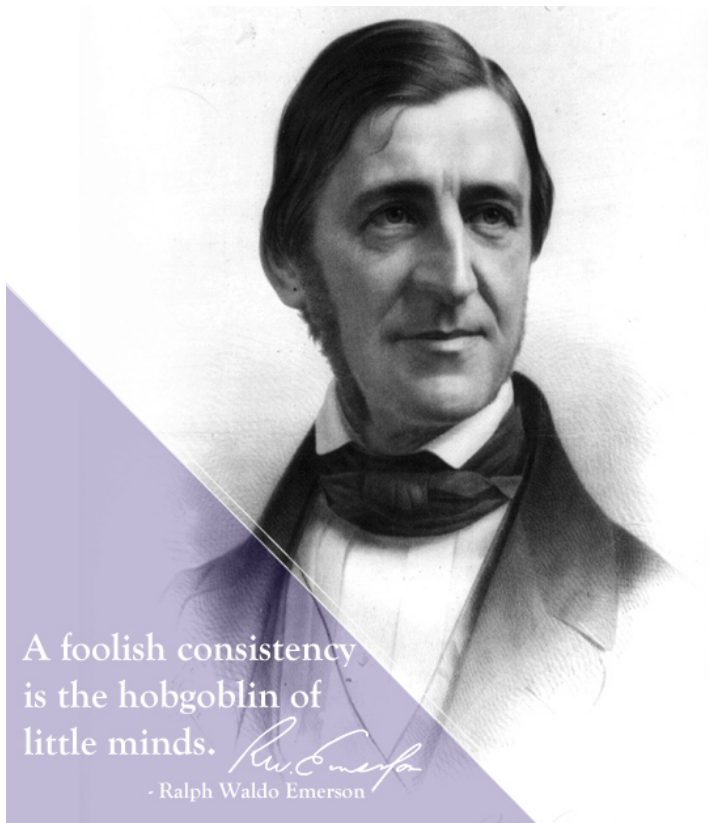
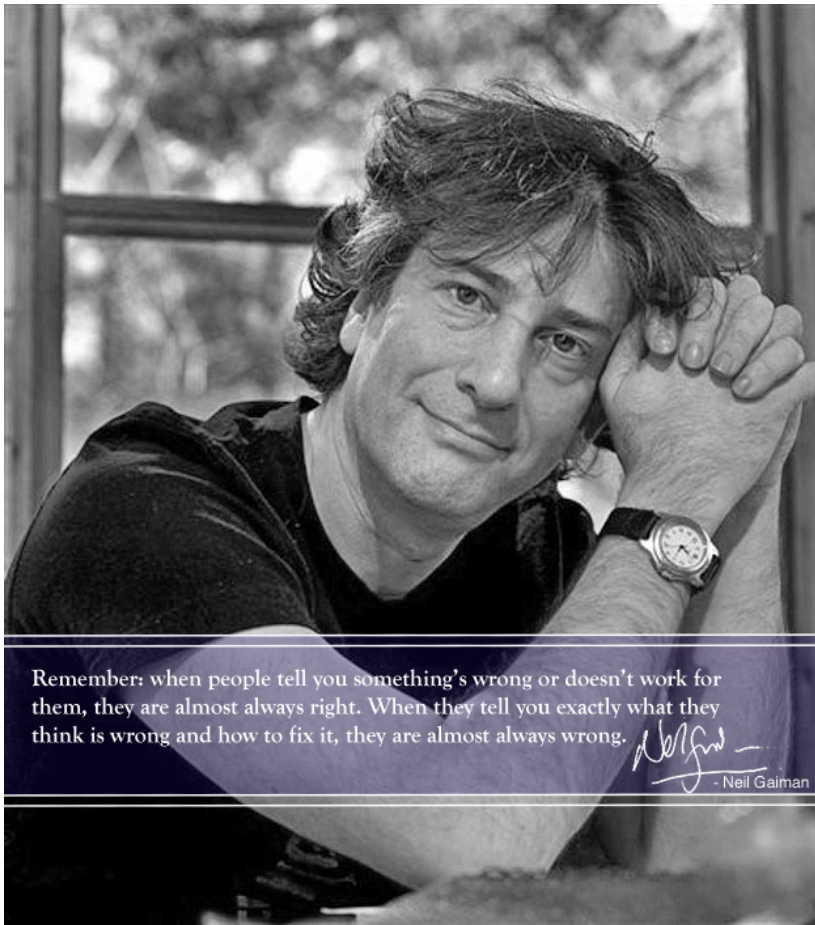


Image by Mark Lennihan / AP

11. Ralph Waldo Emerson



12. Neil Gaiman



13. Maya Angelou

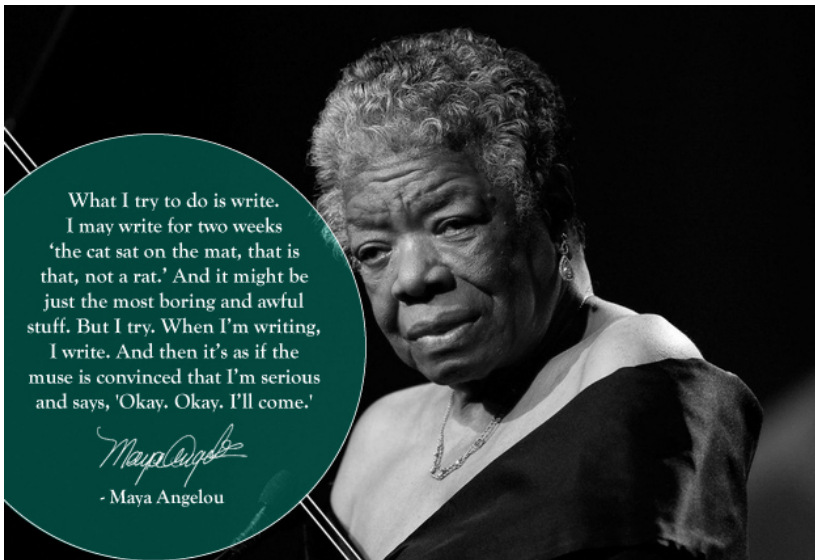
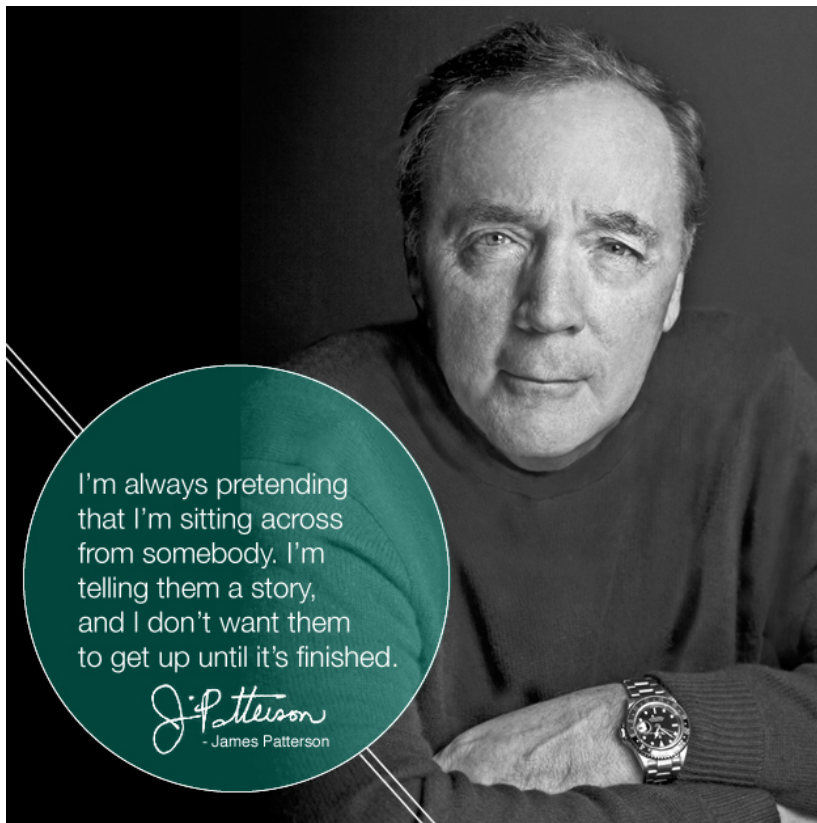


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14. James Patterson

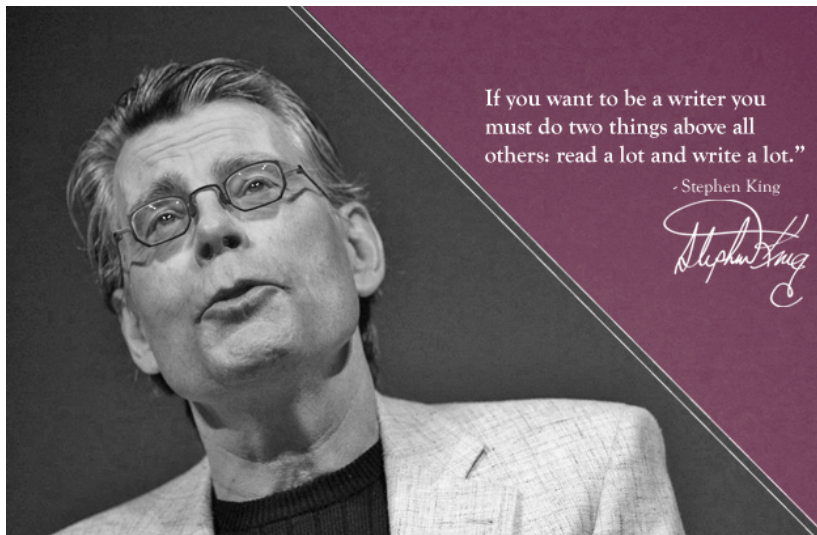


I'm always pretending that I'm sitting across from somebody. I'm telling them a story, and I don't want them to get up until it's finished.

James Patterson
- James Patterson

Image by Deborah Feingold / Reuters

15. Stephen King



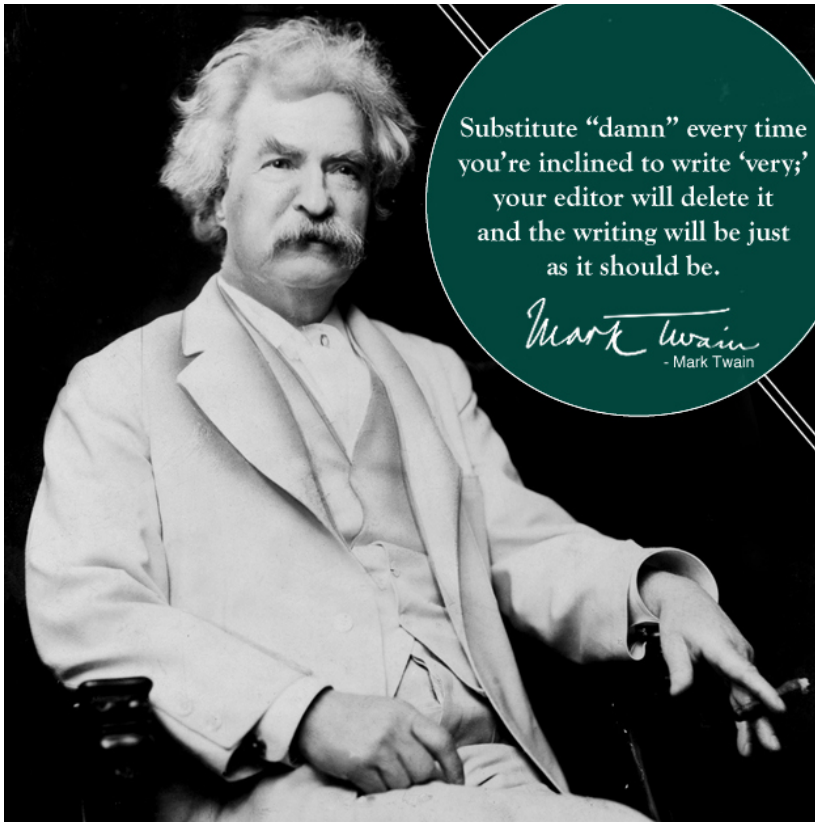
If you want to be a writer you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot."

- Stephen King

Stephen King

Image by MIKE SEGAR / Reuters

16. Mark Twain



17. Toni Morrison

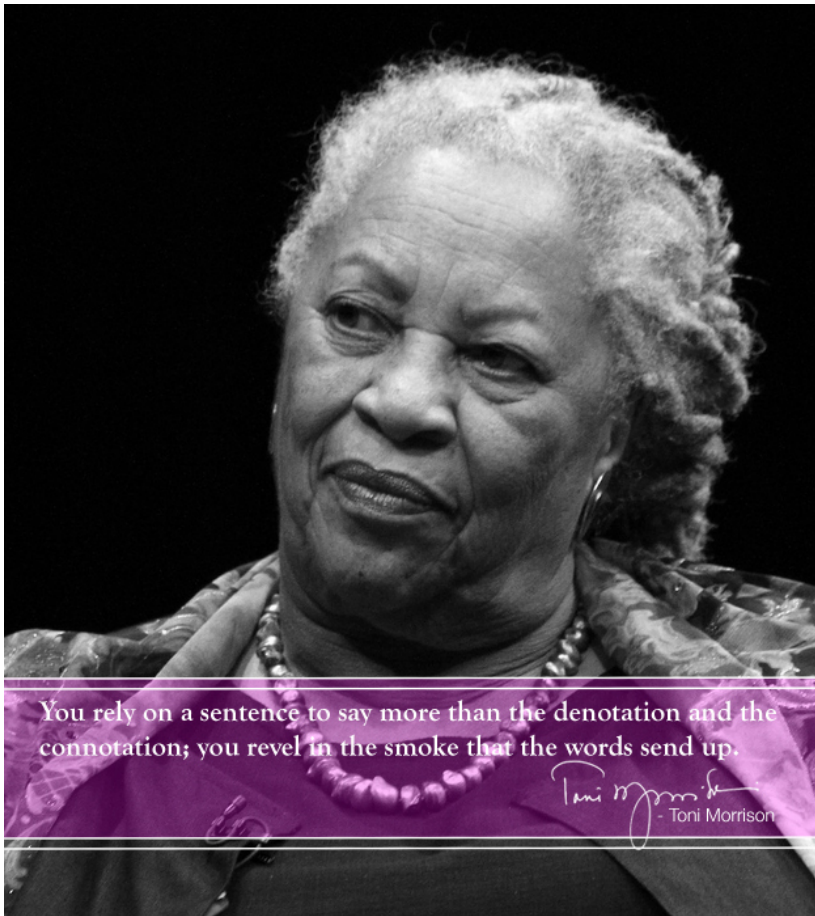
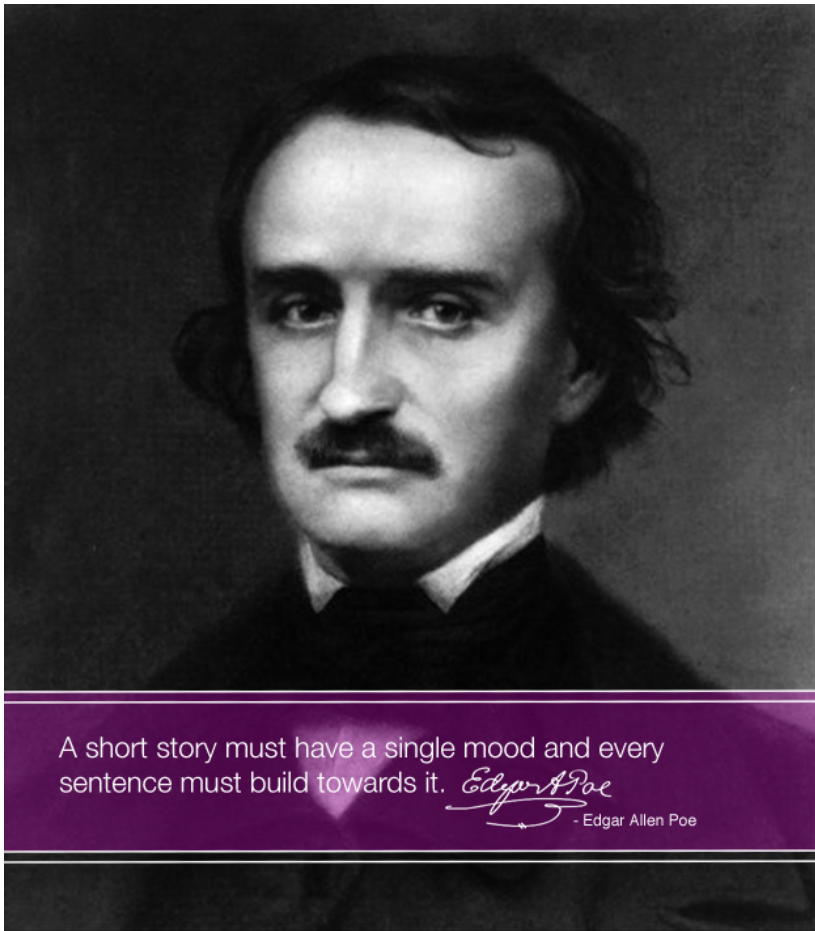
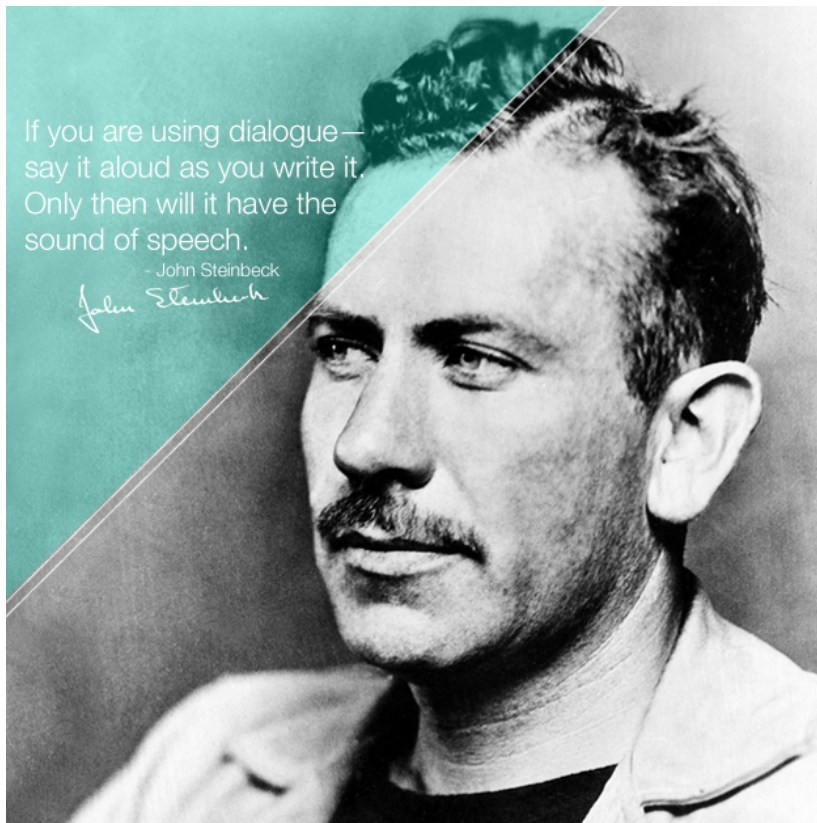


Image by Frank Polich / Getty Images

18. Edgar Allan Poe



19. John Steinbeck



20. Annie Dillard



21. Ray Bradbury



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22. Saul Bellow

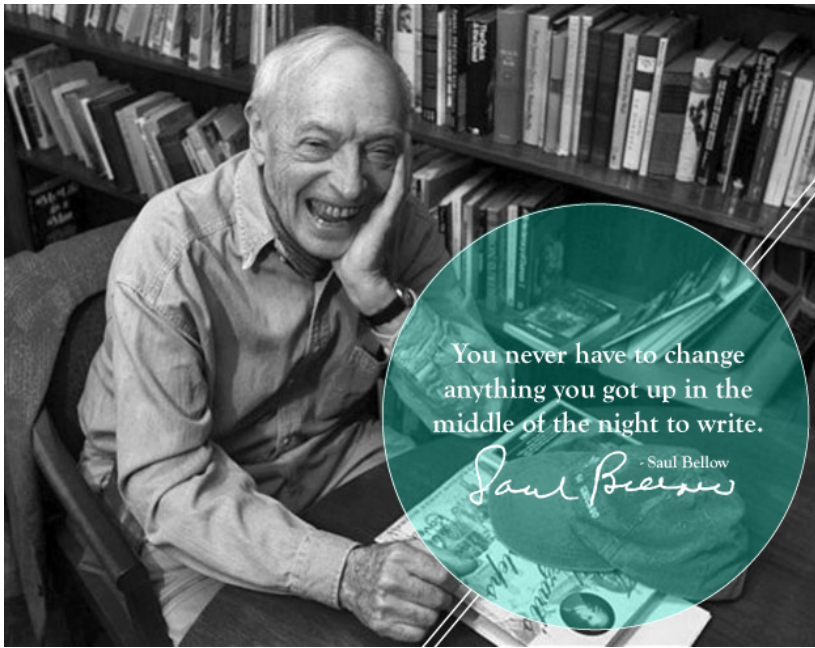
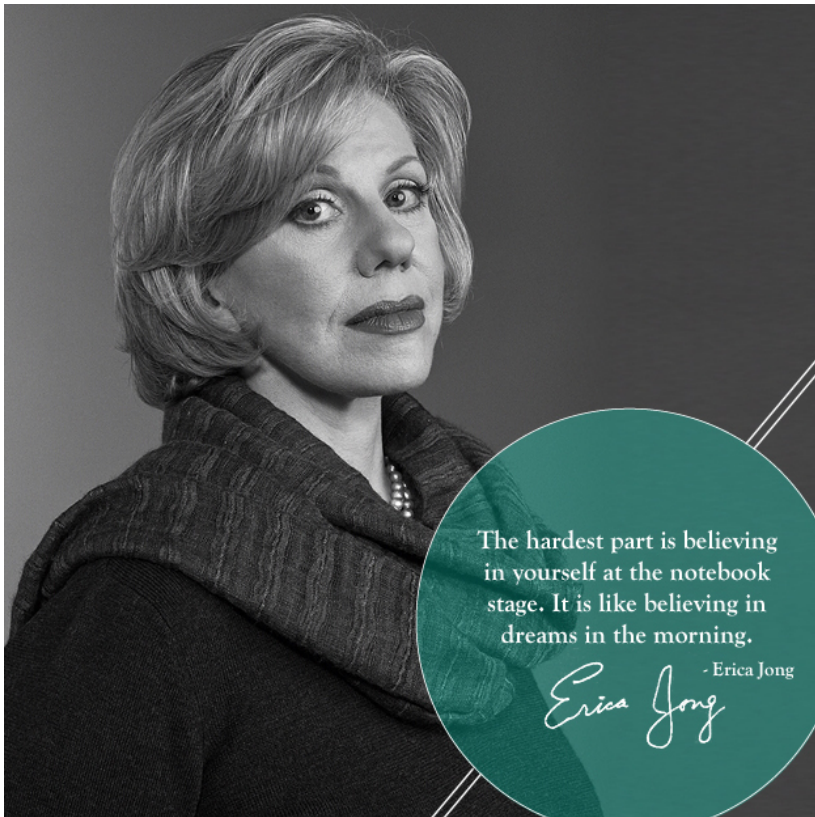


Image by ELISE AMENDOLA / AP

23. Erica Jong



24. Kurt Vonnegut



- 1 Use the time of a total stranger in such a way that he or she will not feel the time was wasted.
- 2 Give the reader at least one character he or she can root for.
- 3 Every character should want something, even if it is only a glass of water.
- 4 Every sentence must do one of two things — reveal character or advance the action.
- 5 Start as close to the end as possible.
- 6 Be a Sadist. No matter how sweet and innocent your leading characters, make awful things happen to them—in order that the reader may see what they are made of.
- 7 Write to please just one person. If you open a window and make love to the world, so to speak, your story will get pneumonia.
- 8 Give your readers as much information as possible as soon as possible. To hell with suspense. Readers should have such complete understanding of what is going on, where and why, that they could finish the story themselves, should cockroaches eat the last few pages.

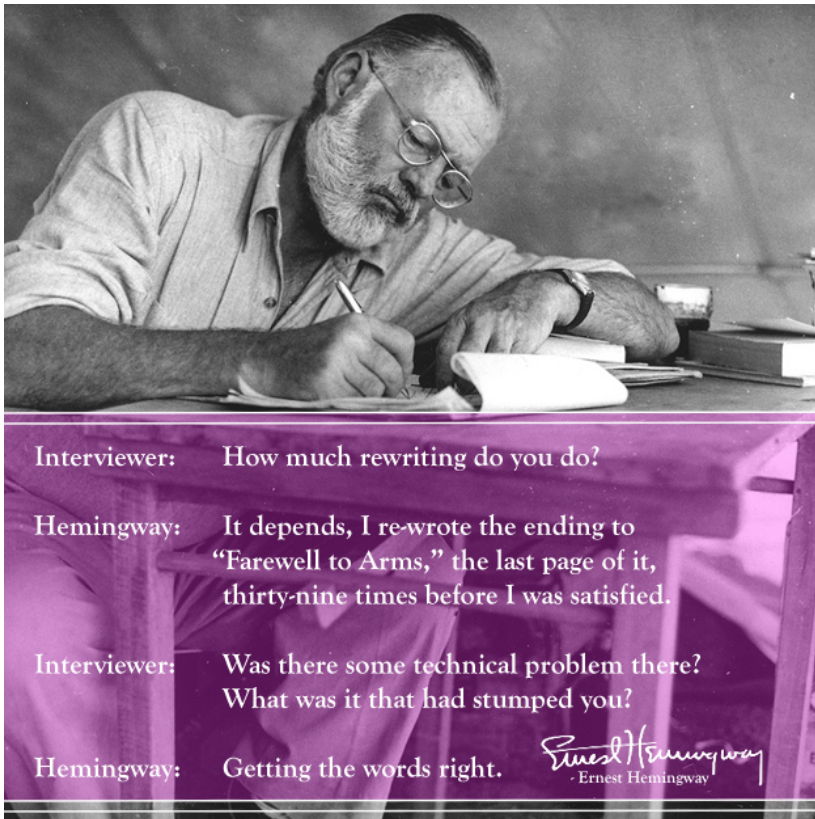
- Kurt Vonnegut

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25. T.S. Eliot



26. Ernest Hemingway



27. Gertrude Stein

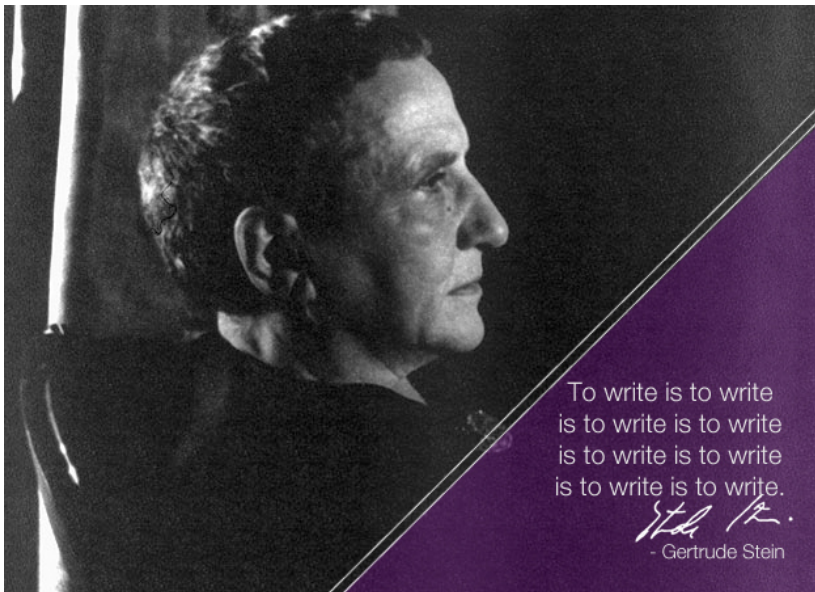
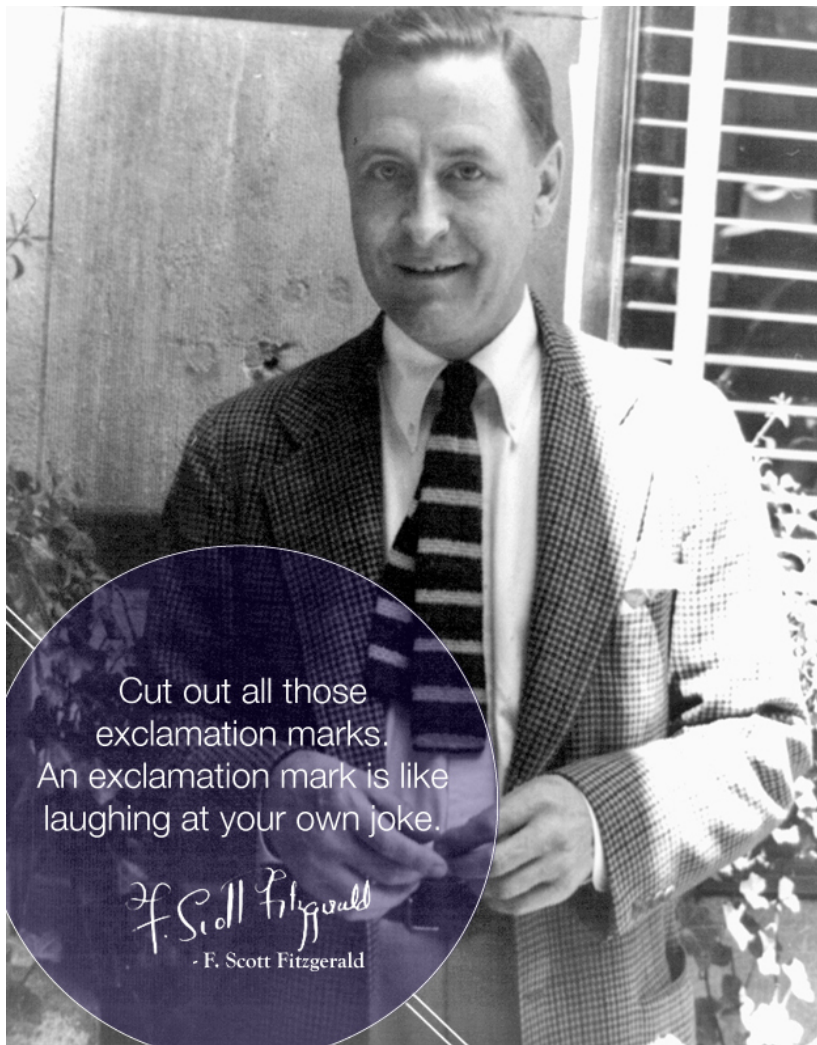


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28. F. Scott Fitzgerald

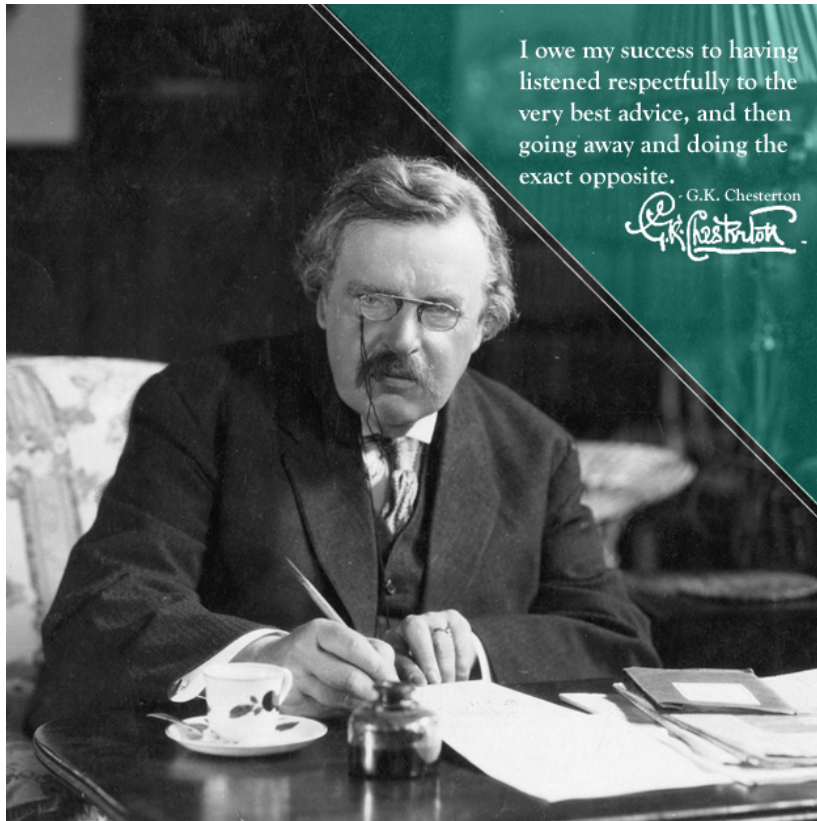


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29. Neil Gaiman



30. G.K. Chesterton



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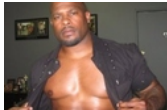


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Famous Authors' Signatures



Mr. Marcus Admits Starting Porn Syphilis Outbreak By Altering His Test Results

Every outbreak has a patient zero. Porn actor Mr. Marcus has come out and identified himself as the performer responsible for the current syphilis outbreak that has shut down production in the San Fernando Valley.



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LOL



Pokemon If They Were Created By Tim Burton

LOL



How To Say LOL In 14 Different Languages

Partner Buzz



Randy Travis Cited In Church FIGHT -- 'Extremely Intoxicated'

11:38 AM PT -- A source close to Randy tells TMZ, the singer was NOT drunk, nor had he been drinking. The source says

POSTED BY
TMZ

JUST LAUNCHED

Obama Responds To Romney Birther Joke

President Obama responds to Mitt Romney's joke about his birth certificate with a simple tweet: Song of the day: Born in the U.S.A.

POSTED BY
politicalwire.com



Rock The Bells 2012: Nas Shares "Bye Baby" Video Details

At Rock the Bells 2012, legendary MC Nas explains why he doesn't shoot many videos and how he responds to critics.

POSTED BY
fuse.tv

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Markasaurus Rex

Charlotte, North Carolina

Of course my favorite, not listed:
"Write drunk; edit sober" –Ernest Hemingway.

Reply · 61 · Like · Follow Post · August 16 at 12:13am



Megan Brese

Top Commenter · 22 years old

some great advice for sure.

Reply · Like · Wednesday at 2:09pm



David Payton

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Why are things judged by how many 'white', 'men', 'women', or 'people' of color' there are? Why can't it just be left as successful 'people'? Stop looking for things to be 'offended' about. Stop looking at things based on what race or gender everyone is. Just see them as people. Racism and sexism works both ways. It will only end when it truly doesn't matter either way.

Reply · 57 · Like · Follow Post · August 17 at 11:18am



Beckie Hawk

Madison, Georgia

The left get's all upset when you "label" them... but they are the authors of labeling in America!

Reply · 3 · Like · August 17 at 11:33am



Justin Vokey

Top Commenter · Dallas, Texas

Well it generally becomes an issue when nearly the entire list is made up of white males. I can think of dozens of critically acclaimed authors who could have been on this list that aren't white males.

Reply · 9 · Like · August 17 at 12:24pm



John Ellis

Princeton University

You mean, like Maya Angelou or Toni Morrison?

Reply · 24 · Like · August 17 at 4:53pm

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Mikael Ojok

@lili river, really? so we have to be politically correct even when sharing tips? let's say I come across something exciting I want to share with y'all; you really expect me to check out the RACE and GENDER of the author before I can share it? seriously? what a pile of hogwash. Do you realise how ridiculous that is? And, for avoidance of doubt, I'm not white. 'fact I'm not just black, I'm African- from Uganda. Stop with that patronising (if you are White) or self-pitying (if you are a person of colour) talk. It's maddeningly annoying!

Reply · 37 · Like · Follow Post · August 16 at 3:59pm



Jane Gloria

West Visayas State University

overdoing her anti-racism there... so annoying as shit.

Reply · 1 · Like · August 18 at 5:47am



Lana Minor

Top Commenter · Columbia, Missouri

Yeah...no. One shouldn't have to check the race/gender of authors when compiling an article like this. If one had a more diverse education that included the works of women and racial minorities, then it wouldn't be an issue. It would've been done without a second thought from the compiler. This list just shows us how Eurocentric and male-dominated our grasp of arts and literature can be, due to our educational systems valuing these works above those of equally, and perhaps more talented, minority individuals.

Reply · 5 · Like · August 20 at 1:23am



Randy Bradford

Top Commenter · The University of Kansas

I still vote on just posting the quotes without attributing authorship....then we could focus on the wisdom instead of fighting over something as trivial as the chromosomes and skin pigment of the people that churned out the wisdom. You're assuming some merit or value was placed on these above others, rather than a guy compiling the first 30 quotes he came across.

Reply · 4 · Like · Tuesday at 7:00pm



Simone DeBlasio

Subscribe · Los Angeles, California

love these tips, but I feel you missed an opportunity to quote some great women: Dorothy Parker, Nora Ephron, Erma Bombeck, Emily Dickens, Edith Wharton, and Oscar Wilde.

Reply · 21 · Like · Follow Post · August 16 at 2:23am



Sophia Bo

Top Commenter

I hope this was intentionally because I has to laugh out loud.

Reply · 6 · Like · August 16 at 2:13pm



Simone DeBlasio

Subscribe · Los Angeles, California

absolutely intentional. i'm a sassy ass. :)

Reply · 6 · Like · August 16 at 2:28pm

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22 of 27

8/25/12 12:22 AM

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Vonnegut continued with: "The greatest American short story writer of my generation was Flannery O'Connor (1925–1964). She broke practically every one of my rules but the first. Great writers tend to do that." Source: preface to *Bagombo Snuff Box*.

 [Scott Seltzer](#)
6 days ago

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makes me wanna read

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Loved this. Here's my own humble parody. 🇺🇸

 [joeb11](#)
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Not all consistency is foolish. There is only one M in Emerson.

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The Orwell tips comes from a personal piece he wrote called 'Why I

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Write'. He had a perfectionist's obsession with the English language because he fully understood the power of words. Good read.



johnnykong

a week ago
- I thought Hemmingway wrote standing up?




FlickMontana

a week ago
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I doubt Twain would've left out the very important semicolon.




Crocoduck

a week ago
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My thoughts, exactly. 

i49.tinypic.com




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"Write drunk, edit sober." – Ernest Hemingway




austin adams

a week ago
- 2 Responses to This ↑

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as a journalism major, i really appreciate this post.




Danielle W.

a week ago
- 2 Responses to This ↑

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Finally, white guys are given a voice!




skydivingcoroner

a week ago
- 6 Responses to This ↑

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I am consisently creeped-out by how much Paul Walker looks like John Steinbeck.

–Which can only mean Steinbeck is a vampire and hangs out with Kate Beckinsale and her shiny black ass.




wonkyd

a week ago
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I adore Kurt Vonnegut's signature.




spinthestars

a week ago
- 3 Responses to This ↑

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"Write horrible Twilight fanfic, change the main character's names and make them have a lot of sex, sell it for millions of dollars." –E.L. James




triscuity

a week ago
- 3 Responses to This ↑

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Spend 5 pages describing what Bella wore to school the first day.

– Stephanie Meyer



Leron V

a week ago
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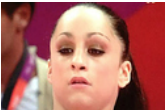
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